

W. J. Utten Browne, Esq., then proposed the following resolution—

"That the position of the Norwich Union Life Insurance Society, as evidenced by the statement of its progress during the year ending June, 1842, is very satisfactory to this meeting, and such as fully entitles the Institution to a continuance of that support which it has hitherto received from the public."

Mr. R. Steward seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The Chairman said he was not aware of any other business, and therefore declared the meeting closed; and Mr. Utten Browne then said that every Assurer was convinced of the debt of gratitude they were under to the Directors and to their excellent Secretary, the object of his present resolution was, however, to propose a vote of thanks to their Chairman for his conduct in the chair.

The resolution was carried unanimously; and Mr. Booth having briefly acknowledged it, the meeting broke up.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS.

THERE is, as many of our readers already know, a body of men under the above title, charged with the duty of directing and in a way superintending the erection of parsonage houses, &c., in destitute districts; these, like the Church Building Commission, have a large function and influence beyond the mere circle of their nominal appointment—they, like the former, have control in the choice and employment of the architect, and exercise, or may exercise, no little power in the dominions of taste. We are not disposed to undervalue the services of the former commission, in having saved us from the perpetration of many blunders and disgraces in the constructive section of church fabrics, notwithstanding the now and then half-provoking interference of their *wise blind safe* and director, Mr. Good; notwithstanding that he occasionally elips the wings of some new adventurer, and denies to admiring wonder the novelty of the present, or the revival of a questionable practice of former days; all this careful and considerate supervision we can afford to give them credit for, and care little for making abatements, when they have stepped beyond the line of legitimate interference; but there is one thing, above all others, that we owe them much for, which, we are sorry to say, does not seem to be so scrupulously observed by their fellow commissioners of the ecclesiastical function above named; the Church Commissioners are allowed to have exercised their power with a due respect to the nomination of local authority; the Ecclesiastical Commission, stepping over this just and equitable line—if report speak true—and interfering in an arbitrary manner in the practice of architects, discharging one and appointing another, and all this, too, as it appears to us, without the least sanction of a necessity, or any plea but that of a wanton caprice or leaning of favour.

We have seen some plans lately for a parsonage house in the midland districts, from the hand of Mr. Railton; they are nothing extraordinary, and, indeed, are strongly objected to by some we have heard speak, because of their nondescript character as to style, and as to some interior arrangements; in this, however, we are not disposed to join; there is merit in the design enough to make comments upon it impertinent, except for the purpose of dealing with the matter or the manner of its choice. We are informed that some architect from the neighbourhood of Plymouth had been employed, and had gone to considerable trouble in preparing his design, but was superseded for Mr. Railton; no one appreciates Mr. Railton's talent and worth more than we do, and we are therefore the more readily brought to the consideration of a matter in which his probity is concerned. We hope he has nothing to do with any ungenerous usage of a brother professor; or if he has unwittingly been led into it, that he will wipe his hands of it in the way in which it may best become him.

CLERICAL MENDICENCE.—The Rev. W. J. Brodrick, who is rector of Bath, knowing the crowded state of the Abbey and other burial-grounds within his rectory, has most magnificently come forward, and at the cost of upwards of three thousand pounds, supplied a cemetery, and presented it to the abbey parish. It is to be consecrated in August.

DR. SPURGIN'S PATENT MACHINE FOR HOISTING BRICKS AND MORTAR.

We have seen this machine in operation at a lofty building now being set up by Mr. Cubitt, by the Albert Gate, Hyde Park. Considerations of humanity alone would induce us to give it preference over the toilsome, dangerous, and, we will venture to add, heart-wearing practice of running up the many-storied ladder which the bricklayer's labourer is accustomed to. There are certain things that machinery ought always to be employed in, and this is one of them. In Wales it is the practice to this day for men to carry most of the stones up to the walls of buildings, by an inclined pathway of planks; sometimes the stones on the back, the labourer proceeding forward in a stooping posture; and in other cases where the stones are too large, or so small as to be numerous to the burden, on hand-barrows borne by two men. This plan would be laughed at in England, where the ingenuity of the machinist applies to the "winch and fall," and the day is not far distant when bricks and mortar, as by this plan of Dr. Spurgin's, will be invariably hoisted by machinery. Who that has looked upon the monkey-like agility, the darning, and the extreme exertion of the "Paddy," as he is termed, ascending the scaffold with a full hod of bricks or mortar, has not, like ourselves, said it was a task unfit for our species, and not less degrading, custom excepted, than to see them engaged in drawing carts and waggons; equally degrading, we say, and unprofitable as it would be, to put a dozen men in lieu of two or three horses, to drag the harrow or the plough? So we say it will be thought in a short time, when the simple machinery of Dr. Spurgin comes into general use. To carry bricks up lofty ladders on men's backs, will be thought as absurd as to raise large blocks of stone to the tops of buildings by rollers and inclined planes, instead of by the travelling crane now in common use. The present plan is a wanton waste of human energy and courage, and ought not to be tolerated except in extreme cases. There is quite enough for poor humanity to achieve in the way of brute labour, in transferring the cumbersome materials from one point to another on the same level, without being required to this unnatural exercise of mounting from one level to another. We do hope that an abridgement will speedily take place in this respect, convinced as we are that it will be followed by that which cannot be said of the working of all machinery, that it will extend the sphere of useful and suitable employment to the general building artificer.

To facilitate the operation of raising bricks and mortar to buildings of great height, will be to increase the demand for a higher, that is a more intellectual, species of labour; more carpenters, masons, bricklayers, &c. can be employed, and not less labourers, but all gained out of the turning of this machine; it is a turning or winding machine. At present, we observe a couple of men employed turning the handle which supplies the moving power to an ordinary wheel and axle, over which axle a bar-link chain revolves in connection with a second axle—all placed in one frame upon the ground—and this latter axle connected by a large vertical chain to a wheel or axle frame at the top of the building, or rather at a scaffold arranged for the topmost level of the building; this vertical chain is of long links or loops, so formed or connected by cross pins that the hods containing bricks or mortar can be hooked on in the course of its slow and steady ascent, and as easily disengaged on its arrival at the level where it is required; the chain is an endless one, so that the returning empty hods are hooked on the descending side, and find their way to the ground. We shall hope to illustrate our article and make it clear in a succeeding number.

Let us not, however, be misunderstood; we will make no compromise on this or any other occasion before the prerogative of capital and the prerogative of labour—happiness to the many rather than gain to the few, is our motto—and it is because, fortunately for the inventor of this machine, that the former requirement seems to be promised rather than the latter, that we turn our attention to Dr. Spurgin.

STUCCOS AND CEMENTS.

THE valuable qualities of the lime obtained from the lias formation, and known in commerce as *BLUE LIAS LIME*, require to be known throughout the building trade. We have previously, in general terms, mentioned the peculiar uses for which it is adapted, and now transcribe from the article headed "Stucco" in the volume of miscellanies in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, written by Professor T. L. Donaldson, Professor of Architecture, University College, the additional information that seems needful, and which also refers to works where this material has been employed.

"Blue Lias is the most valuable material employed for construction in England, as it combines many of the qualities of the calcareous and of the aluminous cements. Mortar compounded of lias will always be most efficient, if kept for some time after mixture, before it is used up; it will improve every time it is reground, or again mixed up by hand. In the ordinary mode of slaking, it is left, after calcination, when the water has been added, covered by cloths or fine sand, in order to confine the steam or vapour thrown off during the process of slaking. After lying eighteen or twenty-four hours, the lime will have fallen into a fine powder; one gallon of water will be sufficient for one bushel of lime, and it should be sprinkled over it equally, and the heap be well moved before laying it up. If too much water be used, the lime will set instead of falling to pieces and pulverizing. It should then be passed through a fine sieve, and the larger particles again subjected to the same sifting process. When blue lias is to be used by the plasterer, for rendering or stucco, it is ground in a mill and reduced to a fine powder, so as to pass through a very fine sieve, with twenty-four openings to the inch. It should lie in bins or chambers some weeks before it will be fit for use as stucco; for if worked up fresh or hot it will at first set most quickly, but it will soon after swell, crack, and fall off. The lias, when ground, will keep good a year or two, if preserved in a dry place; the only difference in using it then, is, that it will not set so quickly; but it will eventually become equally hard.

"For brickwork under water, or exposed to the water, one portion of lime will take only one or one and a half of sand; but if above the water, two of sand to one of lime. Three portions of sand may be added to one of lime for the first coat, and two of sand to one of lime for the finishing coat. For concrete, one-seventh of lime will be ample.

"For stucco, the first coat should be mixed with a coarse grit sand, and left rough; the finishing coat having a fine sand; and if intended to have a smooth surface, being worked with a covered float; the more labour used in the sifting the better. In plain work, lias cement is as expeditious as the Shephey cement; but in mouldings and other elaborate work, it requires much longer time. The natural colour of the lias cement, is a fine stone tint; it therefore does not require, as the aluminous cements, a wash; but if after the lapse of time it may be thought necessary, it may be gone over with a wash, formed by a small quantity of the lias cement, mixed in plain water, which will readily adhere and remain; or the outside may be rubbed and cleaned off as Portland stone.

"The principal buildings in London which have the exteriors rendered with blue lias cement, are Belgrave-square, by Mr. Baveri; Hyde Park Gardens, by Mr. Crake; and the Club Chambers, in Regent-street, by Mr. D. Burton. In the new rooms in the British Museum, and the interior of the Post Office, St. Martin's-le-grand; it has also been used extensively by Sir Robert Smirke.

"The basin to the St. Katherine's Docks, on the side next the Tower of London, is faced with pavilions set in blue lias mortar. As its introduction into works in the metropolis had been so recent, the men were at first not prepared for the peculiar care required by the blue lias lime in slaking, mixing, and subsequent application, which are so different from the chalk, or Midway, or Dorking lime; but after some practice they were able to prepare and use it properly, and it has been found to answer the purpose admirably."

We are sorry to record another instance of that Vandal mischief, which, to the honour of the enlightened capitals of the Continent, has been so rare amongst them till of late, that precautions against its practices have not been thought of. During the night of Sunday, the 2nd inst., the frescoes, which decorated the arcades in the garden of the royal residence at Munich, were so injured with some pointed instrument, as to be wholly undistinguishable. The strictest investigations have failed, yet, to discover the author of this disgraceful outrage.—*Athenæum*.